



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

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Governor

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Governor Richardson Announces \$35 Million in Stem Cell Research and Supercomputing Initiatives

ALBUQUERQUE —Governor Bill Richardson today joined Senator Jeff Bingaman in announcing major, multi-million dollar investments in stem cell research and supercomputing. The Governor's plan will include a **\$10 million** investment in stem cell research as well as **\$25 million** in the supercomputing power needed to thoroughly study a variety of medical, scientific and social issues.

"Hope must prevail over controversy when people are suffering," said Governor Richardson. "Today, states are the true innovative policy incubators in our nation. And this announcement shows that once again, states are taking the lead while there is an absence of leadership from the Bush Administration."

The Governor's \$10 million stem cell plan includes:

- **\$2 million** to establish a nationally-recognized training program in Stem Cell Research for medical students, graduate students, residents, fellows, physicians, and scientists.
- **\$4 million** to recruit nationally recognized scientists. Funding is needed to support the initial recruitment costs plus provide start-up funds to buy necessary equipment and supplies, and to train and develop staff.
- **\$4 million** in capital to establish state-of-the-art research facilities for Adult *and* Embryonic Stem Cell Research. Federal guidelines currently prohibit work with embryonic stem cells in space that has been constructed with federal funds. This capital outlay will be used to build a *state-funded* area devoted to embryonic stem cell research.

This funding will be used over the next three years to develop stem cell research and regenerative medicine at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center. This new multidisciplinary effort will help address diseases and conditions that greatly affect New Mexicans, including:

- **Cancer** - utilizing stem cells to treat leukemia by replenishing mature blood cells that are destroyed as patients undergo chemotherapy.
- **Diabetes** - Embryonic stem cells show promise in helping replace insulin-producing pancreatic cells. This is one of the greatest hopes and most vigorously pursued arenas of current stem cell research.

- **Brain and Behavioral Illnesses** – Stem Cells may be the key to helping combat the effects of Alzheimer’s disease, Lou Gehrig’s disease, Spinal Cord Injury, Trauma and Stroke.

By funding Stem Cell Research, New Mexico will also be on the leading edge of a fast growing bio-tech industry.

“Stem cells offer unparalleled promise for treating many diseases, ranging from MS, spinal cord injury and Parkinson’s Disease to diabetes, heart disease and cancer,” said Dr. Dinesh Patel, Managing Director of Utah-based vSpring Capital. “vSpring applauds New Mexico in joining in the much needed stem cell and regenerative medicine funding arena with this new initiative.”

“As a robust science and technology state, the research that will emerge from this New Mexico initiative will hopefully translate into opportunities for investors tomorrow,” said Dr. Albert Waxman, Founder of Santa Fe’s Psilos health care venture capital fund. “Most importantly, this is a clear signal that we have entered an era where emerging technologies and personalized medicine promise to radically improve the way health care is delivered in our lifetime.”

Governor Richardson also announced a **\$25 million** supercomputing initiative to dramatically increase New Mexico’s high tech resources. Supercomputers help with a wide range of research like examining how stem cells evolve into different types of cells that repair the damage from diseases, improving the performance of clean energy sources in reducing climate change and improving the performance of manufactured goods.

Over the next year, a consortium including Intel, UNM, New Mexico Tech, and NMSU, as well as New Mexico’s national labs and other state institutions, will create an up to 200 Teraflop computer in New Mexico. This supercomputer will be about 100 thousand times faster than a typical laptop. This will be one of the most powerful computers used for unclassified research in the world.

The state will also construct a New Mexico Computational Applications Center (NMCAC) in Albuquerque that will focus this computing power on problems that are of importance to New Mexicans, including health and stem cell research, clean energy, and water.

“This center will provide college and university students with a tool to make them competitive with the best institutions in the world,” said Governor Richardson. “The Center will help us attract outstanding researchers from around the world. And I am very optimistic about what this will mean for potential spin off business and new jobs in New Mexico.”

This new resource will help New Mexico expand its bio and medical technology efforts, as well as nanotechnology, homeland security, the film industry, space sciences and creating new technologies for clean and renewable energy.